

RE: Boyer Model

From: Kyle Carter
Sent: Wednesday, November 05, 2008 2:32 PM
To: Academic Affairs Division
Subject: Memo from Chancellor and Provost /
Importance: High

November 5, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

Since we are applying the Boyer Model for the first time this year on promotion, tenure and reappointment decisions, we thought it would be a good idea to remind you of its basic tenants and how we, as Chancellor and Provost, interpret its application on the WCU campus. Although we have individually addressed a number of questions in a variety of forums, we continue to get feedback that leads us to believe that confusion still exists. So, we hope this joint letter will clear that up. Here is our collective position and interpretation of the Boyer Model for our campus.

Broadening Scholarship. The Boyer Model broadens the type of scholarship that can count toward promotion and tenure. Our institutional policy recognizes four types: discovery, integration, application (sometimes called engagement) and teaching and learning. The departmental Collegial Review Document (CRD) defines discipline specific standards for each type of scholarship and may indicate a preference for a particular type. However, all forms of scholarship count toward promotion and tenure regardless of discipline.

Scholarly Activity vs. Scholarship. There is an important distinction between scholarly activity and scholarship. A scholarly activity is an action that has not been vetted to determine its value. Consider this example. A faculty member writes a review on the effects of global warming (integration). When she is finished, she sets the article on her bookshelf and lets it stay there. Is this a scholarly act? Yes. Is it scholarship that will count toward promotion/tenure? No. Why? It hasn't been evaluated by discipline experts who can attest to the validity of the methodology or its scholarlyness. Let's take another example. An engineering faculty member conducts a process redesign (application) for a major corporation. He prepares the specifications for change and collects data to evaluate the design. Is this scholarly activity? Sure. Is it scholarship that will count toward promotion and tenure? Not yet. The evaluation component is missing.

Alternative Peer Review. We recognize that some disciplines will continue to vet their scholarly activity through traditional means like publications. However, the Boyer Model will allow faculty to engage in other forms of scholarship that may not lend themselves to traditional forms of evaluation. That is why our institutional policy provides for an alternative peer review process. When faculty engage in this type of scholarly activity, they need to submit their work in a form that can be evaluated by disciplinary experts, practitioners or both. Who the external evaluator(s) is depends upon the nature of the problem. However, evaluators must be external to the campus and must have the capacity to assign value to the project and attest to its scholarlyness. As most of you are now aware, our institutional guidelines require each department to describe its strategy for alternative peer review in its CRD document. As Chancellor and Provost, we make no distinction about the relative value of the types of scholarship or the methods of evaluation. Those finer points we leave up to the department as expressed in the CRD document.

We know that some of you are struggling with the new concepts, especially the scholarship of engagement and how to count it. We encourage you to read the attached article. Please pay particular attention to the section beginning on page 7 which deals with evaluation.

We recognize that our current process is still in development and faculty are grappling with new definitions and procedures. It will take a while for all to feel comfortable with the new methodology. However, a great deal of progress has already occurred as a result of departments developing their CRD documents.

Hopefully, this joint letter has helped to provide some additional clarification on the Boyer Model and our P/R/T document. We want you to know that we appreciate your hard work in adapting to this fundamental change.

Sincerely,

John Bardo, Chancellor

Kyle R. Carter, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor